

## CLAIMS:

C1 A user interface comprising:

- (a) structured information whereupon the information is dynamically partitioned into three groups ("prior", "current", and "subsequent"); and
- (b) two or more window panes:
  - (i) exactly one window pane comprising one or more user interface widgets used to enter or modify the portion of the information in the current partition ("focus panel"); and
  - (ii) at least one other window pane which displays a print layout representation of the information in the prior or subsequent partitions ("content panel")

C2 A help system comprising :

- (a) structured information whereupon the information is dynamically partitioned into at least three groups:
  - (i) selected
  - (ii) non-selected
  - (iii) help; and
- (b) two or more window panes:
  - (i) exactly one window pane where some or all of the information in the help partition can be displayed and interacted with ("help pane"); and
  - (ii) exactly one window pane comprising one or more user interface widgets used to enter or modify the portion of the information in the selected partition ("focus panel"); and
- (c) a mechanism for placing the help panel along a line directly adjacent to the focus panel such that the focus panel does not contain the help panel; and
- (d) a mechanism to show and hide the help panel where
  - (i) the show mechanism can displace or hide the focus panel to make room for the help panel
  - (ii) the hide mechanism returns the focus panel to its relative position prior to the help panel being invoked by the show mechanism
- (e) a mechanism by which the contents of the help panel dynamically change based on the context of the widget within the focus panel
- (f) a mechanism by which the contents of the help panel dynamically change based on interaction

within the help panel itself

- C3 A user interface as described in Claim 1 and
- (a) a help system where standard help content can be placed adjacent the user interface in a separate pane;
- C5 A user interface as described in Claim 1 adding one or more of the following:
- (c) a method for performing one or more of the following operations:
    - (i) adding additional current information;
    - or
    - (ii) changing which information is current and which information is prior or subsequent.
  - (d) where the relative position of the focus panel stays constant
  - (e) where information can be partitioned by the following:
    - (i) row, column, or instance of text or graphic
    - (ii) keyboard or mouse or method of pointer navigation
    - (iii) by any application-determined method
  - (f) where hidden information can be added such that
    - (i) the hidden information is displayed in a field or widget within the focus panel
    - (ii) the hidden information can be shown or hidden within the focus panel
    - (iii) the hidden information can contain links or attachments to external objects
  - (g) where the widgets within the focus panel can contain, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:
    - (i) links or attachments to external objects
    - (ii) calculated fields
    - (iii) standard form objects such as radio buttons jump menus, list boxes, text fields, check boxes, multiple select lists, image field hidden field, buttons
    - (v) functions which execute external objects
    - (vi) additional panes containing one or more widgets that can be shown or hidden
    - (vii) dynamically changing widgets or content
  - (h) where the relative position of the focus panel can be adjusted

- (i) where the layout of the focus panel changes based on
  - (i) input from external objects
  - (ii) interaction within the focus panel itself
  - (iii) input from other panes within the application
  - (iv) input from other applications

C6 A user interface as described in Claim 1 wherein the information in the content panel is described in html, and where the information is split by XSLT transform

- C7 A user interface as described in Claim 2 and one or more of the following:
- (a) a step through process in the help panel which can modify, add, or delete content in the focus panel
  - (b) a system whereby the user can move between the help panel and the focus panel

C10 A user interface for a computerized system comprising:

- (a) a memory which is able to store structured information partitioned into three categories: prior, current, and hidden; and
- (b) a display operatively connected to said memory for presenting said information to a human operator, said display comprising a plurality of regions or window panes; and
- (c) a focus region of said display area which maintains a relatively constant size and position within the display area and which provides a means for said operator to add additional information or modify/delete said information from said current partition of said memory; and
- (c) a layout region of said display, adjacent to the focus region, which provides a means for viewing a representation of a portion of said information from said prior partition; and
- (d) a selection means whereby said operator can cause said information to be re-partitioned;

whereby a programmer can design said layout region to maximize presentation clarity and can design said focus to maximilze editing functionality; and  
 whereby said information is created from or moves into said focus region for editing by said operator and said layout region provides contextual feedback to the operator.

C11 The user interface of claim C10, further including:

- (a) an additional memory partition: subsequent; and
- (b) an additional region, bottom, adjacent to said focus region, for displaying a representation of said information from the subsequent partition;

whereby the user's context is enhanced by showing information from both said prior and said subsequent partitions while editing information from said current partition.

C12 The user interface of claim C10, further including:

- (a) an additional memory partition for storing help information pertaining to information stored in said prior, hidden, and current paritions; and
- (b) an additional region, adjacent to said focus region; where said help is displayed in a manner sensitive to the content of said current partition;;

whereby the user is provided with both a display of said prior information and also said help information relevant to said current information in said focus region.

C13 The user interface of claim C11, further including:

- (a) an additional memory partition for storing help information pertaining to information stored in said prior, hidden, and current paritions; and
- (b) a switching means where by said bottom region can alternatively display said help information sensitive to the content of said current partition in lieu of displaying a representation of information from said subsequent partition;

whereby the user is provided with both a display of said prior information and either said subsequent information

or said help information while editing information said current information in said focus region.

C14 The user interface in claim C10, restricted so that:

- (a) said prior, hidden, and subsequent partitions are stored in a manner consistent with XML data; and
- (b) said layout partition is displayed using an HTML layout tool or browser;
- (c) said focus partition consists of one or more standard user interface widgets such as list boxes, text edit areas, radio buttons;

C15 The user interface in claim C10:

- (a) restricted so that said focus and layout regions are of a fixed size and position instead of adjusting to the needs of content;

whereby said operator is not jarred with automatic screen resizes.

C16 The user interface in claim C11, whereby:

- (a) said information in said hidden, current, and prior partitions are ordered;
- (b) said prior partition contains only information which comes before information in the current partition;

whereby said operator is able to view and edit a sequential structure such as a document or form.

C17 The user interface in claim C16, whereby:

- (a) said layout partition shows a representation of a subset of said prior partition which is closest to said current information;

whereby said operator is able to immediately see information recently entered or edited above said focus region in said layout region.

C18 The user interface in claim C10, whereby:

(a) said layout partition emulates a peice of paper;

whereby a typewriter metaphor is used for the interface presented to said operator.